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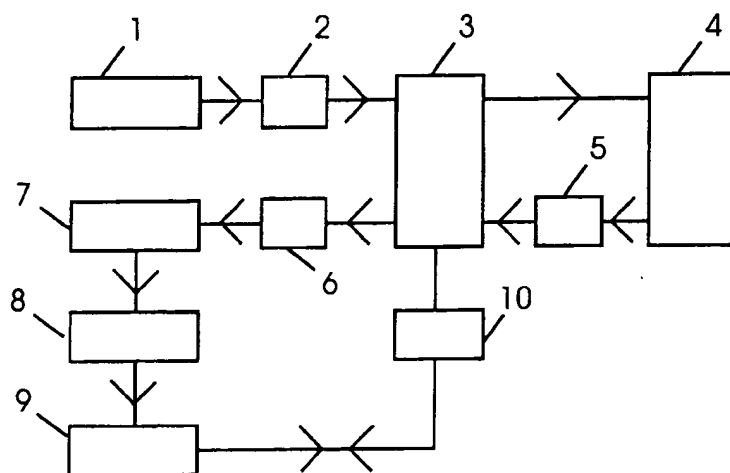
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(54) **MONTAGE D'ANALYSE SIMULTANEE DE PLUSIEURS
LIGNES OPTIQUES**

(54) **ARRANGEMENT FOR SIMULTANEOUS ANALYSIS OF
SEVERAL OPTICAL LINES**



(57) An optical spectrum analyser of novel design, in which several different spectra can be measured and analysed simultaneously. A measuring signal is used as a reference signal for calibrating the optical spectrum analyser. The light rays are admitted via a coupling device with several coupling apertures arranged in a line; and via a separate decoupling device comprising respective decoupling apertures arranged in a line, the light rays are decoupled. Height offset is realised by a 90° deviation prism. The arrangement makes possible simultaneous analysis of several optical lines with little retroreflection as well as uninterrupted calibration of the measuring process.

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ARRANGEMENT FOR SIMULTANEOUS ANALYSIS OF SEVERAL OPTICAL
LINES

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DESCRIPTION

The present invention relates to high-accuracy optical spectrum analysers in a new arrangement for carrying out
15 several simultaneous measurements at several signal sources.

In the area of optical communications technology, optical spectrum analysers are used whose principal areas of
20 application are the characterisation of the optical components and the monitoring of optical transmission paths. Optical spectrum analysers which according to the Littman design comprise a corner prism as a deviation mirror and a common lens for the coupled and decoupled
25 light, provide several advantages such as compact design and robust performance. A big disadvantage is the high retro-reflection to the input fibre, which during measuring of optical components or optical transmission systems can lead to erroneous readings. Such an optical spectrum
30 analyser is for example disclosed in US 5 886 785.

Conventional optical spectrum analysers, such as for example those known from EP 0 540 966 B1, have the further disadvantage in that the spectrum of only one source can be
35 measured. If measurements from several sources are required, for example on different optical waveguides of a transmission system or in front of and behind an optical component, then clumsy and time-consuming reconnection of the waveguide, or else installation of an expensive optical
40 switch, is necessary.

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It is thus the object of the present invention to propose an option which provides for simultaneous measurement of several optical spectra.

10 According to the invention this object is met by using an optical arrangement in an optical spectrum analyser according to the characteristics of claim 1. Further advantageous embodiments are provided in the related subordinate claims.

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According to the invention an optical arrangement is used with a device for coupling several light rays; a collimator for generating parallel bundles of light from the diverging light rays arriving from the device for coupling; a device
20 for diffracting the impinging light rays along a dispersion axis; a deviation device for guiding the dispersed light rays offset in relation to the light rays coming from the dispersion device for a second time, to the dispersion device; and a focusing device for focusing the light rays
25 impinging from the dispersion device onto a device for decoupling the light rays in an optical spectrum analyser. For this optical arrangement according to the Fuhrmann design, inlet and outlet apertures as coupling or decoupling devices are used, perpendicular to the
30 dispersion axis of a refraction grating (as a dispersion device), for simultaneous analysis of several optical signal paths. The light rays entering via the inlet apertures, of which there are several, which light rays pass through the arrangement independently, are decoupled
35 via the outlet apertures, and the present decoupled optical performances at a specified wavelength of the light rays are measured simultaneously. Selection of the wavelength to be analysed takes place according to the methods well known to the expert versed in the art, for example depending on
40 the position of the diffraction grating or the deviation device, by changing the position of the input or output

5 apertures or by introducing a first-image plane in the optical spectrum analyser in which a diaphragm is moved for wavelength selection. At the inlet- and outlet apertures for example several optical waveguides are arranged in a line. By precisely defined spacing between all coupling-
10 and decoupling apertures, an offset perpendicular to the direction of dispersion of the light is provided, so as to prevent light from cross-coupling between the individual light rays at the outlet gap. The emanating light from each individual light ray is beamed onto a reflecting dispersion
15 grating by a collimator. It is also possible to use a concave diffraction grating (concave mirror) instead of the collimator and the diffraction grating. In front of the optical spectrum analyser or in the optical spectrum analyser, a device for compensating the polarisation
20 dependence of the optical spectrum analyser can be arranged. By way of a deviation device, for example a 90° deviation prism, the light coming from the diffraction grating is reflected back to the diffraction grating and in this process it is offset so that it impinges a second time
25 on the diffraction grating, but at another place, spatially offset, where it is dispersed. By way of a focusing device, for example a second lens, subsequently the individual light rays are focused on the decoupling devices from where they can be transmitted via optical waveguides to a photo
30 detector or similar. Single mode fibres may be used as inlet waveguides and outlet waveguides. It is also possible to use multimode waveguides as outlet waveguides.

For wavelength tuning, either the diffraction grating or
35 the deviation device can be rotated in the known way. To this effect, the respective device is connected to a motor with a position sensor which is controlled via a computer and a digital/analog converter. The signal of the position sensor is read out and transmitted to the computer via an
40 A/D converter. From the position signal and the calibration

5 of the spectrum analyser, the computer can determine the wavelength scanned at any particular instance.

Changes in temperature of the optical arrangement lead to changes of the physical parameters of the existing
10 materials and to wavelength errors which do not meet the requirements for measurement in wavelength multiplex transmission systems. For this reason, according to a further preferred embodiment, a signal path is used as a reference signal with a precisely known wavelength
15 spectrum, for calibrating the optical spectrum analyser and equalising the wavelength drift. Subsequently the light is fed in with known spectral characteristics, and the spectrum is simultaneously measured using the measuring channels, without interrupting the measuring process. Based
20 on the existing position information of the motor and the reference spectrum whose wavelength is precisely known, the computer can recalibrate the device parallel to the measuring process. The wavelength of the reference signal may be in the optical spectral range of the signal to be
25 measured. By contrast to other known processes it is not necessary to store the position information relating to the reference spectrum and to evaluate it in a subsequent pass.

The invention provides the advantage that several spectra
30 can be measured simultaneously, and several optical waveguides can be monitored simultaneously. Up to now this necessitated the costly use of several optical spectrum analysers. The invention makes it possible to take measurements at several sources simultaneously, with only
35 one set of the complicated and costly components such as gratings, drives or mechanical assemblies being required for simultaneous measurements. Since spatially-offset decoupling points are used, very low retroreflection to the coupling points is attained. Furthermore, calibration of
40 the optical spectrum analyser for compensation of

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5 wavelength drift, for example due to heating up, is possible while the device is in operation.

Below, further advantageous embodiments are explained in more detail by means of an example, in conjunction with the
10 accompanying drawings. The following are shown:

Fig. 1 a block diagram of an embodiment of an optical spectrum analyser; and

15 Fig. 2 the optical arrangement in an optical spectrum analyser according to Fig. 1.

In Fig. 1, the bundle of rays are represented by their principal rays. According to Fig. 1, the optical spectrum
20 analyser, using a ray arrangement according to the Fuhrmann design, comprises a coupling device 1, a refraction grating 3, a reflection device 4 and a receiving device 7. The coupling device 1 comprises inlet apertures, arranged one on top of the other, via which several light rays enter
25 independently of each other. These are fed to a collimator 2 which transmits the bundle of light rays to a diffraction grating 3. After dispersion, the light rays are transmitted via the reflection device 4 which is a deviation prism and which causes a height offset of the light rays. For
30 polarisation compensation, the individual light rays are subsequently transmitted through a device for polarisation compensation 5, for example a $1/2$ plate. In this way the polarisation-dependent diffraction efficiency of the diffraction grating 3 is compensated for, in which the main
35 axes of polarisation are changed over, so that a light ray whose E vector is parallel to the grating dimples in the first pass through the grating, is vertical to the grating dimples in the second pass (and vice versa). After the second pass of the light rays across the diffraction
40 grating 3, the light rays are focused on a decoupling device 7 by means of a suitable focusing device 6. The

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5 decoupling device 7 also comprises decoupling apertures,
arranged one on top of the other, for the individual light
rays. Decoupling or coupling takes place by means of
optical waveguides. As an alternative, decoupling of the
light of a desired wavelength can take place directly onto
10 a photodiode for each signal path.

The decoupling device 7 is connected to suitable photo
detectors 8 which detect the rays received and transmit
corresponding signals to a computer 9. Apart from this, the
15 spectrum analyser comprises a device 10 for setting the
rotary movement of, the diffraction grating 3 which is
connected to the computer 9, so that said computer 9,
depending on the position and the wavelength associated
with the position, can determine the wavelength measured at
20 a particular instant. The computer 9 simultaneously
receives the individual measuring signals received; from
these it can determine the respective measuring data and
display them simultaneously.

25 A signal path through the device is used to impinge a
reference signal whose wavelength is precisely known or
whose spectrum is precisely known; said reference signal
being measured simultaneously with the other, unknown, rays
which are to be measured. In this way, the wavelength of
30 the optical spectrum analyser can be calibrated during the
measuring process.

The embodiment according to Fig. 2 provides for four
optical wave guides 11 arranged one on top of the other.
35 The waveguides used are single-mode standard waveguides for
the wavelength range of 1550 nm, with a core diameter of
9 μm . In order to prevent bridging, the spacing between the
waveguides perpendicular to the dispersion axis is 200 μm .
To further reduce retroreflection, the ends of the
40 waveguides may be treated with a suitable anti-reflex
coating, or the ends can be polished at an oblique angle,

- 5 e.g. of 8° . The light rays from the optical waveguides 11, fanned out, are directed to a lens 12 without influencing each other, with said lens 12 collimating these light rays to the reflecting diffraction grating 3. Due to the wide wavelength range of 1280 to 1650 nm of the optical spectrum
10 analyser, an achromatic lens is used which is diffraction limited in the entire wavelength range. The diffraction grating 3 is a flat grating of 900 lines/mm comprising a gold vapour-deposited layer. The individual light rays are dispersed in the known way, directed to a 90° deviation
15 prism 13 comprising a $\lambda/2$ plate 14 covering only half of the deviation prism, a combined deviation device 4 and polarisation device 5. Subsequently, the light rays are dispersed a second time by the diffraction grating 3 and directed to a second lens 15 which focuses the individual
20 light rays on four optical wave guides 16, arranged one above the other. As a result of the height-offset coupling- and decoupling points, very little retroreflection to the respective inlet waveguide is achieved.
- 25 The light rays emanating from the optical waveguides 11 impinge on the collimator 12 where they turn into parallel rays. Due to the differently positioned coupling points, the individual parallel rays are slightly tilted in respect to each other (approx. 0.3°). These light rays impinge on
30 the diffraction grating 3 where they are dispersed to the deviation prism. In the 90° prism the light rays are reflected, offset in height, with the angular tilt between the individual light rays remaining constant. On the way to the second pass across the diffraction grating 3, they pass
35 the $\lambda/2$ plate 14. In the focusing device 15 the parallel rays which are at an angular tilt in respect to each other, are focused, with the height-related order being the same as that at the inlet. In the case of a wide-band light in the optical spectrum analyser there are four parallel light
40 rays with a different wavelength being arranged on each point of a strip. Decoupling of the light of the desired

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5 wavelength is via suitable output apertures and optical waveguides 16.

CLAIMS

1. The use of an optical arrangement comprising
 - a device (1) for coupling several light rays;
 - a collimator (2) for generating parallel bundles of light from the diverging light rays arriving from the device (1) for coupling;
 - a device (3) for dispersing the impinging light rays along a dispersion axis;
 - a deviation device (4) for guiding the dispersed light rays offset in relation to the light rays coming from the dispersion device (3), for a second time to the dispersion device (3);
 - a focusing device (6) for focusing the light rays impinging from the dispersion device (3) onto a device (7) for decoupling the light rays,

in an optical spectrum analyser with several inlet- and outlet apertures (11), arranged offset, perpendicular to the dispersion axis of the dispersion device (3), for simultaneous analysis of several optical spectra, in that the light rays entering via the inlet apertures, of which there are several, independently of each other pass through the arrangement and exit via the outlet apertures (16) and in that the optical performance of the decoupled wavelengths of the light rays is measured simultaneously.
2. The use according to claim 1, in which in a signal path a reference signal with precisely known optical

spectrum is coupled or decoupled for calibrating the optical spectrum analysers.

3. The use according to claim 2, in which calibration of the optical spectrum analyser takes place during the measuring process in the other signal paths.
4. The use according to one of the preceding claims, in which compensation of the polarisation dependence of the diffraction efficiency of the grating is carried out.
5. The use according to one of the preceding claims, in which the decoupled light of each channel is acquired via a photo sensor (8), is subsequently digitised and fed to a computer (9) and from said computer, depending on the position of a diffraction grating (3) or of the deviation device (4), from these signals the optical performance of the currently decoupled wavelength of each signal path is determined.

ABSTRACT

An optical spectrum analyser of novel design, in which several different spectra can be measured and analysed
5 simultaneously. A measuring signal is used as a reference signal for calibrating the optical spectrum analyser. The light rays are admitted via a coupling device with several coupling apertures arranged in a line; and via a separate decoupling device comprising respective decoupling apertures
10 arranged in a line, the light rays are decoupled. Height offset is realised by a 90° deviation prism. The arrangement makes possible simultaneous analysis of several optical lines with little retroreflection as well as uninterrupted calibration of the measuring process.
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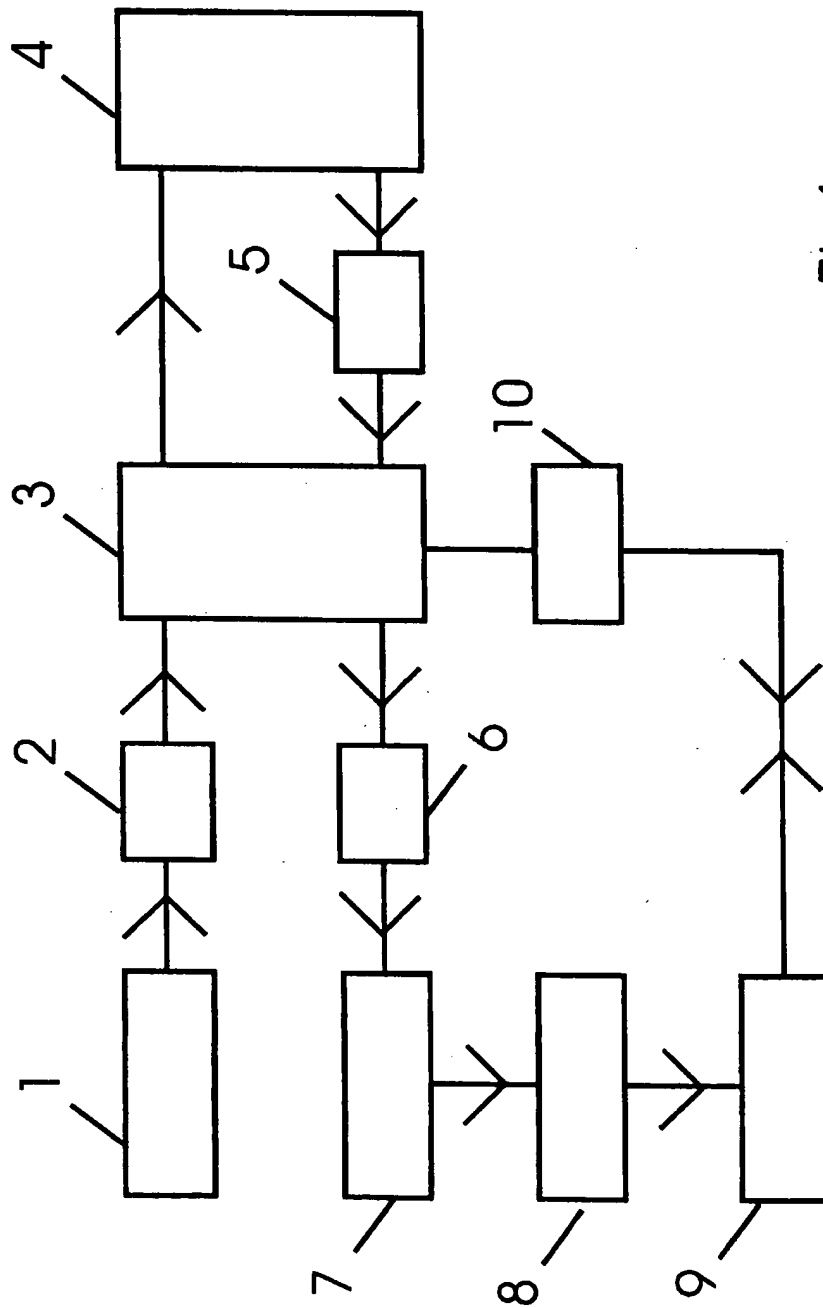


Fig.1

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